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May to Dr. Silver, undated

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Monday

Dear Dr. Silver:

Thanks for the letter. You sounded normal and healthy enough.

There is a vacancy in American history at Tallahassee; but unless Mr. Jordan is capable or amenable to changes of heart, I fear that I would not qualify. He told Dr. Mathews (this before I wrote him) in a letter in which he announced the vacancy, that he positively did not want anybody in certain, specific aspects of American history as he was well stocked in them--and apparently, he had someone in Southern history. Anyway, Dr. Mathews said that he could not think of anybody who would qualify for the opening which Mr. Jordan had--perhaps a specialist in American Diplomatic history (20th century) or American Economic History (20th century)--and I quote Dr. Mathews. I also talked to Dr. Wiley who was polite but uncommunicative. He had not heard of anything and he didn't seem to give a damn. But I am sure that if I find anything on my own, he will be most helpful in trying to cinch it for me. Unfortunately for my relationship with Dr. Wiley, I seldom take his advice and when I do, I find it regrettable (the dissertation idea, for example). He was very cross with me last year with I withdraw my application for a job in Maryland (\$5500) which was practically a sure thing--after I visited the school. I wouldn't have lived in that town and with those colleagues for \$7500, starting salary, and a promise of immediate raises to a maximum of \$12,000, within five years.

Well, if you think, on the basis of the above information that it is worth while to write Mr. Jordan, please do. I don't know myself. But I had already written him before I knew of the vacancy. In fact, I wrote four schools in Florida. Tomorrow I shall write to two in New Mexico and some people I know in Louisiana. Next I shall tackle Texas. I realize that that is the worst possible method of job-hunting. But I know, too, from the experience of others that it sometimes pays off. Of course, I would not leave this school just to make a move. But I do think that the sooner I get an opportunity to teach American history, the better. I am too lazy to do the work in languages at my age that I would feel necessary to proficiency in European history. So there.

I am so glad that you are better. I've fretted and fretted about you. And although I hate to think of the University history dept. without you at the head, I'm glad you said to hell with it, if it bored you. Life is too short, and all that. Was the bout with pneumonia the excuse? If so, I'm disgusted with you for not resigning without that crutch--if you wanted to. What are you, man or mouse?

Be good. Write when the notion strikes you.

Sincerely yours,

May